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RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 0121  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0111  
RUEHFT/AMCONSUL FRANKFURT 2128  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 0042  
RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAHLG/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC  
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/30/2011  
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CVIS](#) [EAIR](#) [PREL](#) [QA](#) [KHLS](#) [IR](#)  
SUBJECT: QATAR AIRWAYS CHAIRMAN SEES MORE BOEINGS AND  
EMBASSY DOHA INTERVIEWING NON-RESIDENT IRANIANS

Classified By: Ambassador Chase Untermeyer, reasons 1.4 (b&d)

¶1. (C) Summary: At a recent meeting with Ambassador, Akbar Al Baker, CEO of Qatar Airways (QA), discussed QA expansion plans for the near future, which he said now include the purchase of 60 Boeing 777 aircraft, up from an original buy of 20. According to Al Baker, QA will fly to Los Angeles and Houston in 2008 after it receives the Boeing 777. Al Baker believes that Iranians will be a large consumer of QA flights to the U.S. and wants Embassy Doha to begin interviewing non-resident Iranians to support this. End summary.

¶2. (C) At a dinner March 23 at the farm of Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim al Thani (HBJ), Akbar Al Baker, CEO of QA, discussed QA's desire to add more direct flights to the U.S. According to Al Baker, QA will fly to Los Angeles and Houston in 2008 after it receives more Boeing aircraft.

¶3. (C) Al Baker claimed that Iranians will compose a large percentage of the passengers on QA's flights to the U.S. He estimated that as many as 50 to 60 Iranians will fly on each flight. Al Baker asked Ambassador if Embassy Doha could begin issuing nonimmigrant visas to non-resident Iranians, in addition to Consulate Dubai. To support this, he reported that the Amir has agreed to 72-hour free entry for Iranians who apply for U.S. visas. Iranians, he said, would then have to stop once in Doha instead of twice in Dubai. Al Baker also offered up a separate QA office to support U.S. consular personnel working on these visa applications.

¶4. (C) Al Baker also believes that a permanent U.S. TSA agent will be stationed in Doha soon. He purported that any aircraft headed to the U.S. from Doha will be "absolutely secure." Al Baker also recommended that a DHS immigration and customs enforcement (ICE) officer be posted to Doha to support this effort.

¶5. (S/NF) The Ambassador convened a meeting March 26 with A/DCM, CONS, RSO, RAO and LEGATT to review Al Baker's request. CONS explained the special interviewing requirements

for Iranians and noted that Doha is not staffed sufficiently to handle such an increase and does not have any Farsi-speaking officers or LES staff. RSO discussed the special requirements needed to handle Iranian applicants, walk-ins, and Iranian intelligence, which would likely require an additional A/RSO. RAO and LEGATT supported the idea as it would afford opportunities to bring more Iranians to a USG facility. Country Team's current position is that Embassy Doha would support becoming an Iranian visa-processing post if adequate staff and facilities can be provided to meet the new demand.

16. (C) Following Washington review of this matter, post requests appropriate talking points to respond to HBJ and Al Baker.

UNTERMEYER